The Battle of Darwin-Goose Green

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OFFICERS STUDY the history of past battles to learn how to be better commanders. Yet more often than not, military history is the study of failures rather than successes. Most interesting battles have been close affairs, in the sense that, at least at one point in the action, victory might have gone to either side. In many of these battles, the final result was decided not so much by what the winner did right, but by what the loser did wrong.

For example, the rapid, decisive character of the victory of Prussia over France in 1870-1871 owed as much to the French's incompetence as to the Germans' superior tactics. The same can be said of many of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's victories over Union armies in the American Civil War or of Israeli victories in 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973. Indeed, it would probably not be much of an exaggeration to suggest that battles in which this was not the case are the exception rather than the rule.

The Falklands War between Argentina and Great Britain was not one of the exceptions. Although the invasion of the Falkland Islands began well enough for the Argentines, most subsequent operations did not. Despite being thousands of miles from their nearest base, the British were able to mount an unopposed amphibious landing at San Carlos, win every land engagement, and maintain air superiority throughout the campaign. While the Argentines did have some successes, including sinking at least six British ships, these came at a heavy cost in pilots and aircraft to the Argentina Air Force (Fuerza Aerea Argentina [FAA]) and Argentina Naval Aviation (Aviacion Naval Argentina [ANA]).[1]

What is most interesting about the Falklands conflict is that, based on commonly accepted military doctrine and the forces available in the theater of operations, Argentina should not have lost so easily. From a strictly military point of view, an eventual British victory was inevitable, but it should not have been such a walkover. Furthermore, such a victory might have required a higher cost in human lives than the British public was willing to pay, which might have led to a negotiated solution. Yet such a strategy of attrition could not succeed in the wake of repeated tactical and operational failures.

At least as interesting as the question of why Argentina so easily lost the war is why British historians have failed to consider the conflict from the Argentine perspective. Saying that the British were better trained or had better tactics and doctrine is fine, but war depends as much on what an adversary does as on what one does oneself. Among the dangers inherent in failing to consider an adversary's possibilities—even after the fact—are the learning of inappropriate tactical lessons and the complacency caused by overconfidence. Israel, for example, had fallen into both traps in the years leading up to the Yom Kippur War.[2]

After the unopposed landing of 3 Commando Brigade at San Carlos on 21 May 1982, the British occupied the hills surrounding the settlement and consolidated defense of the beachhead. Despite strikes by the FAA and ANA that resulted in the sinking of four British ships, the Argentine Army made no attempt to prevent the amphibious landing.[3] First among the many reasons for this was that they did not have land vehicles capable of traversing the terrain of the islands, which had few roads. Second, British air superiority made it too dangerous to fly helicopters. Finally, a march was out of the question: the nearest Argentine troop concentration was at Goose Green, more than 20 kilometers away.[4] By the time these troops reached San Carlos, the five British battalions would have already adopted their defensive positions in the hills.

Brigadier Julian Thompson, commanding the landing force, ordered Lieutenant Colonel Herbert "H" Jones, commanding 2 Battalion, Parachute

Regiment (2 Para), to plan a raid on Argentine positions at Darwin and Goose Green. These positions, located on a narrow isthmus connecting East Falkland with Lafonia, were of no strategic importance for Thompson, whose objective was Stanley, the capital. However, his brigade would not be ready to advance on Stanley for several days, and he wanted to use the time to "establish moral and physical domination over the enemy," as instructed by Major General Jeremy Moore, who took command of the land forces when he arrived in the Falklands 2 weeks later.[5] Nevertheless, when they discovered how little artillery could be moved with the helicopters available, the raid was called off. Thompson was not willing to risk a battalion by sending it without adequate artillery support in a raid that was not absolutely necessary.

Joint headquarters in the United Kingdom proved more willing to take the risk, concerned as it was that the war might not appear to be going well to the British people, who had seen no victories and four of Her Majesty's ships sunk. Thompson was therefore ordered to send 2 Para to capture the positions at Darwin and Goose Green, regardless of the availability of artillery, to secure a victory for the British public. While 2 Para moved south to the Darwin isthmus, three of the brigade's other battalions marched east toward Stanley, with the last battalion remaining at San Carlos to defend the beachhead.[6]

When planning the advance, Jones did not adhere to Helmuth Carl von Moltke's dictum that "no plan of operations extends with certainty beyond the first encounter with the enemy's main strength."[7] Instead, he planned a complex six-phase operation requiring exquisite timing and coordination between his three rifle companies and his patrols company. The battalion would march south to Camilla Creek House, about 8 kilometers north of Darwin, where it would reform and rest before crossing the start line halfway between Camilla Creek and Darwin. The plan was for one company to move down either side of the isthmus. The other companies were to follow to provide support and, depending on the phase, pass through to attack their own objectives. Artillery support would come from three 105-millimeter (mm) cannons, as well as from the guns of HMS *Arrow*, which would be available for naval gunfire support until forced by the onset of daylight to retreat to the relative safety of San Carlos Water. Much of the fighting was to be done before dawn.[8]

To meet the advance, Lieutenant Colonel Italo Piaggi, commander of the 12th Infantry Regiment and garrison commander at Goose Green, had an assortment of men from three different regiments of infantry, including two companies (A and C) of his own 12th Regiment; a reduced C Company of the 25th Regiment; and a section of C Company of the 8th Regiment, which gave him a total of 554 officers and men, a total approximately equal to a British infantry battalion (620 officers and men). This mixed unit was named Task Force Mercedes after the city in which the 12th Regiment had its peacetime garrison. In addition to the infantry component, Piaggi had three 105-mm guns and a handful of antiaircraft guns. Also at Goose Green were 202 Air Force troops under the command of Vice Commodore Wilson Pedrozo, who was charged with manning Air Base Condor. Pedrozo's planes (Argentine-built Pucarás designed for counterinsurgency operations) had all been sent to Stanley for safety.[9]

Because the British had control of the air and sea around the islands, an attack on Goose Green could theoretically have come from the north, by a direct march from the San Carlos beachhead; from the south, by an airborne landing on Lafonia; or from the beaches on either side of the isthmus. With no intelligence on British intentions, Piaggi had to deploy his troops so he could meet a threat from any direction.[10] As a result, he divided his forces, placing a detachment in the small hills north and west of Darwin, a detachment in the south, and a reserve at Goose Green. In the days before the British landings, the northern troops had positioned themselves across the isthmus, from where they could fire on troops approaching from the north and redeploy rapidly to meet an amphibious operation. In addition, they placed minefields and boobytraps in front of the prepared positions to further impede the British advance.[11]

Despite the extensive defensive preparations, on 26 May, Piaggi was ordered to move out of the positions in the north and adopt a more aggressive response toward the anticipated British attack. So, when the British advance made contact with the first line of Argentine defenders on the morning of the 28th, the British were not confronted with an entrenched unit with minefields in its front but, rather, with a detachment out in the open with minefields along its line of retreat. Not unexpectedly, the surprised Argentine conscripts did not stand up well to the British advance and began to retreat almost immediately.[12]

The British advance along the eastern side of the isthmus drove the retreating Argentines back into their prepared positions, where they were able to regroup and halt the forward progress of the attack. Meanwhile, the troops on the British right had met heavy resistance—a company of reinforcements had arrived by helicopter from Stanley to shore

up the Argentine defenses and counterattack and stopped the British on the western side of the isthmus. In an attempt to break the stalemate, Jones led a charge toward one Argentine position on his left, but was hit by rifle fire from another trench. Although this resulted in Jones's death, it also provided the Paras with the momentum they needed to overrun the Argentine positions near Darwin. Outflanked on their right by this attack and on their left by a company of Paras sent along the beach, and suffering heavy casualties and a shortage of ammunition, the Argentine forces withdrew toward Goose Green.[13]

As the Argentines fell back to the settlement, the British began to encircle it, completely surrounding Goose Green by dusk. Although it seemed there was little hope for the men of Piaggi's task force, around this time they were reinforced by Combat Team Solari's 132 officers and men, who had been transported from Stanley by helicopter and landed just south of Goose Green around dusk.[14] These troops increased the total number of combat troops available by nearly a third and might have been used effectively in a counterattack.

Major Chris Keeble, 2 Para's second-in-command, who assumed command of the battalion following Jones's death, felt there was no point in fighting any longer. He did not have enough men or ammunition for an assault on the village, but he knew both were on the way. The Argentines were surrounded and would eventually have to surrender or die fighting. Keeble did not want to have to fight his way into Goose Green, whose 114 residents—held during the battle in the community hall—might suffer in the subsequent combined artillery and aerial bombardment. In an ultimatum delivered to Piaggi, this is precisely what Keeble proposed to do. Specifically, the ultimatum note called for the surrender of the Argentine troops under Piaggi's command, the alternative to which would be the bombardment of the settlement. While artillery and air support had not been effective during the fighting, three Harriers had dropped cluster bombs near the Argentine positions just before dusk, and Piaggi and his men were well aware of what a precise strike on their position could accomplish. Keeble also pointed out that, because he was informing Piaggi in advance of the bombardment, the Argentines would be held responsible for any civilian casualties under the rules set forth by the Geneva Conventions.[15]

Piaggi did not see any point in continuing the struggle. He explained the situation to the joint commander at Stanley, who authorized, but would not order, a surrender. Ultimately it was up to the officers in the settlement to make the decision, and they decided—although not unanimously—to avoid any further bloodshed.[16] On the morning of 29 May—ironically, the Argentina Army's National Day—the soldiers and airmen of Task Force Mercedes surrendered to 2 Para, officially ending the Battle of Darwin-Goose Green.[17]

Should Argentina Have Won?

The Argentina Army had few natural advantages in the Falklands conflict. Its troops were not as well trained or as well supplied as those of the British. Nor could the Army benefit from naval gunfire or close air support. Despite these disadvantages, however, Argentine troops had at least four major areas in which they should have had the upper hand: parity in numbers, the ability to use airmen as infantry, counterattack, and national spirit.

Parity in numbers. In the early 19th century, Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz wrote, "Defense is the stronger form of waging war."[18] Modern military doctrine has attempted to quantify this statement by recommending that when attacking prepared positions the ratio of attacking to defending troops should be three to one. While such a ratio is seldom attained, it does suggest the magnitude of the advantage held by defending troops. At Darwin-Goose Green, 2 Para did not come close to achieving that force ratio. Indeed, the numbers of troops engaged in combat on both sides were roughly equal. Further, this parity extended to artillery and machineguns, as well as to close air support, although the British failure with respect to the latter was largely caused by the weather. The Argentines could have done more to exploit the natural advantage granted by the defensive. Perhaps their greatest failure in this regard was the abandonment of their prepared positions for positions further forward in the days before the battle.

The use of airmen as infantry. Another way in which the Argentines could have exploited a defensive advantage would have been to use FAA troops as infantry, an option which they seem not to have even considered. Despite having not been trained as combat troops, the more than 200 airmen at Goose Green could certainly have been used to strengthen the defensive positions in the north, especially as they were serving no other useful purpose. This option would have given the Argentines a potentially decisive advantage over their British attackers at the point of the attack.[19] Instead of having their value as fighting men impressed on them, they were left at Goose Green to defend the airport, a position they abandoned as the British approached, leaving a gap in the Argentine line that allowed the penetration by D Company, 2 Para, in

the afternoon. The airmen's withdrawal was made without Piaggi's knowledge or authorization.[20]

Counterattack. The arrival of reinforcements on the evening of the 28th provided Piaggi with yet another option that might have turned the tide—counterattack. While most Argentine troops might not have been prepared to continue the struggle, the troops that arrived from Stanley on the afternoon of the battle should have been. Further, although the British had the advantage of momentum, the Paras were tired, cold, wet, and low on ammunition. Keeble himself noted, "If they had counterattacked at dawn they would have thrown us off the battlefield because we were totally outgunned and wrong-footed."[21]

National spirit. Finally, the Argentines had on their side what Clausewitz has called Volksgeist, or national spirit.[22] For them, the recapture of the Falklands was a point of national honor. The islands had been claimed by Argentina since its independence from Spain in 1820, and the officers and men of the Army, Navy, and Air Force in 1982 had grown up with the idea that, someday, the islands would be recaptured from Britain (perceived as a colonial usurper), which had occupied them since 1833. To the Argentines, the Falklands were a part of Argentina and, despite their lack of economic or strategic value, something worth fighting for. Unfortunately, Volksgeist did not prove to be enough.

Why Did Argentina Lose?

Keeble, the officer to whom the Argentines surrendered at Goose Green, wrote: "I believe the Argentines *lost* the battle rather than the Paras *winning* it. In fact I suspect that is how most conflicts are resolved."[23] While this demonstrates humility, it also shows insight into the fundamental nature of combat. No matter how well or poorly the British fought, the battle was Argentina's to lose. It is important to note, however, that no single factor can be said to have produced the defeat.

Lack of intelligence was a major factor. While both Piaggi and the joint command in Stanley suspected a British attack on the positions at Darwin and Goose Green was imminent, they did not know when or from which direction it was coming. Furthermore, they did not know whether to expect a raid, as Thompson had originally planned, or a full-scale attack to capture the positions. In either case, they did not know how many troops to expect.

Operationally, this lack of intelligence translated into a front that was massively overextended. Because Piaggi did not know where to expect the attack, he had to place troops at both ends of the isthmus and still be able to cover the beaches in case of an amphibious landing, which left an insufficient number of troops at every position.[24] Had the Argentines possessed better intelligence on British troop composition and movements, they might have placed the bulk of the task force in positions on the northern end of the isthmus to meet 2 Para's attack. This presumably would have made the attack more difficult for the British. Also, better intelligence at the end of the battle would have given Piaggi a more complete situational picture, which might have allowed him to consider a counterattack.

While a lack of intelligence to support good decisionmaking was one issue, the level at which decisions were made was another. For example, the order for the troops defending the northern sector of the isthmus to leave their prepared positions and move north did not come from Piaggi but from the Stanley joint command, which derived its view of the tactical situation only by radio communications with Goose Green. This resulted in Argentine frontline troops being in exposed positions when the British attacked, and having a minefield to their rear through which they would have to retreat.

Intervention by senior commanders is not unique to the Argentine Army. Indeed, the British advance to Darwin-Goose Green was precipitated by commanders at joint headquarters attempting to control events thousands of miles away. What is important to note here is not the occurrence of the problem but the fact it was made possible by the real-time communications link between Stanley and Goose Green. The idea that the proliferation of such links might tempt future commanders to exercise control at inappropriate levels has been discussed elsewhere.[25]

Possibly, the perceived need to impose tactical orders on the troops at Darwin and Goose Green was caused by a failure on the part of the joint command to appoint a commander on the ground. Although Piaggi was the commander of Task Force Mercedes, composed of portions of the 8th, 12th, and 25th Infantry Regiments deployed on the isthmus, Pedrozo was actually the ranking officer at Goose Green. More than once, Piaggi asked his superiors at Stanley for clarification of the chain of command, but none was forthcoming. Even though Pedrozo was an Air Force officer untrained in the tactical employment of ground troops, he did not hesitate to involve himself in the direction of the battle. At one point Piaggi became so frustrated with this intervention that he told Pedrozo, "Please do me a favor, and get out of here."[26] One of their major disagreements concerned the surrender: Piaggi and Pedrozo had different opinions about how to proceed, and in this case, their actions

became an issue not only of authority but also of responsibility.[27]

Piaggi's leadership at Darwin-Goose Green has also been questioned. Specifically, José Eduardo Costa has pointed out that while 2 Para's commander and all of the company commanders led from the front, Piaggi and his staff remained at their command post at Goose Green during the battle. Noting that the highest ranking Argentine officer at the front was a first lieutenant, Costa writes, "The experience of an Argentine commander at the front line of combat during the action would have been essential for the tactical conduct of the battle."[28]

The most interesting aspect of this argument—the idea that the British were successful because their officers led from the front—is that one of the major British historians of the battle, Spencer Fitz-Gibbon, has devoted an entire book to precisely the opposite argument.[29] Fitz-Gibbon argues that it was not Jones's detailed planning or micromanagement that led to the British success. Instead, he points out the battle only opened up for the British after Jones's death, when Keeble gave his company commanders a free hand to accomplish their assigned tasks as they saw fit.

Another problem with Costa's criticism of Piaggi is that he fails to take into account the geographical distribution of Piaggi's troops and the dearth of available radios. From his command post at Goose Green, Piaggi was able to communicate by courier with his troops in both the north and the south, as well as by radio with the joint command at Stanley, from which he constantly requested close air support and resupply of ammunition.[30] Under normal circumstances, Piaggi would have deployed to the front with one or two noncommissioned officers (NCOs) and controlled the battle from there while his second-in-command remained at the command post and communicated with Stanley. However, the presence of only one radio—confiscated from one of the local residents—rendered such an organization impossible.[31]

Neither of these arguments is entirely conclusive. For one thing, Auftragstaktik requires commanders and their subordinates to share a mental model developed by means of common training and experience. However, Piaggi was new to the 12th Regiment and had not trained the company-grade officers to his way of thinking. Moreover, half of the officers present at Darwin and Goose Green were from either the 8th or the 25th Regiments and were even less familiar with Piaggi as a commander.

On the other hand, the commander's appearance at the front, once the direction of the British advance had been established, might have helped inhibit the retreat. The presence of the commander in the trenches might even have set an example for the men and turned the tide. However, this is mere speculation, especially considering that most of the troops under his command were not familiar with Piaggi.

Criticism has also been leveled at lower ranking officers for not fighting with their men, although this seems to have little foundation, at least at Darwin and Goose Green where most, if not all, of the company-grade officers were in the trenches with their troops. Indeed, 1st Lieutenant Roberto Estévez was killed in action while defending the position near Darwin Hill, and 2d Lieutenant Guillermo Aliaga and 2d Lieutenant Ernesto Peluffo were seriously wounded during the fight.[32] In general, the officers in command of sections or companies performed valiantly in the action on the Darwin isthmus.

The enlisted force also fought well, up to a point. But despite whatever Volksgeist they might have possessed, it could not make up for a lack of adequate training. The private soldiers of the Argentina Army were exclusively conscripts, who did a year of compulsory military service before going to work in the private sector. The only professionals in the Army were the officers and NCOs.

Several problems existed with such a system. First, the training period was not long enough. Second, soldiers called up for service would either have training that was not recent enough or too little training, as was the case with the most recent lot of conscripts. (The 12th Regiment had only 3 months of training before the invasion of the Falklands.) Third, the officer corps suffered because they were reduced to training raw recruits and did not have time to develop tactical or technical skills.[33]

The Argentine troops had other problems that had nothing to do with training. One was the weather. Whereas the Paras had trained in cold weather climates before, but the men of the 12th Regiment came from a subtropical climate and were not used to cold. Further, as one of the last units sent to the Falklands, they had not been adequately provisioned and, indeed, had an insufficient supply of winter clothing, which made soldiering almost unbearable, especially in a region that was cold and always wet in April and May.[34]

In addition to being wet, the troops were hungry. Provisions were inadequate and there was little hope of resupply. The distances between subunits and a lack of vehicles made it difficult to get food and water to the troops. The same problems arose with respect to ammunition. Mortar sections had the most trouble, having expended their

ammunition early in the battle. But the problem was not unique to the mortar sections. By 0930, frontline troops in the northern sector claimed to have exhausted 60 percent of their ammunition. Some sections were compelled to retreat only because they were without ammunition, even after replenishing their supply with ammunition taken from casualties.[35]

Sadly, the major reason for the shortages was simply that many of the 12th Regiment's supplies had never left Argentina, including radios, artillery, mortars and heavy machineguns, and combat vehicles, as well as ammunition. The regiment had been ordered to the Falklands relatively late in the conflict to shore up the defenses against the British task force, then on its way south. The priority was to get the troops across and to worry about the equipment later. Unfortunately for the regiment, by the time the equipment was ready to be sent, the British blockade of the islands had become sufficiently effective that it was considered too risky to send it. The soldiers were left to fight with what was available.

British victory at Darwin-Goose Green was not inevitable, and it was not due to an inherent superiority in either leadership or technology on the part of British forces. Instead, it was caused by a combination of factors on the Argentine side, ranging from multiple organizational dysfunctions to the inability to adequately provision troops in the trenches. Despite the inherent advantages of a defensive posture and an overall numerical superiority, as well as the will to win, the Argentines were not able to overcome the numerous logistical and organizational challenges they had created to defeat the better organized British battalion. The fact that they might have, however, is perhaps the most important lesson of the Falklands War. ***MR***

NOTES

1. Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands* (London: Pan Books, 1997), and Martin Middlebrook, *The Falklands War, 1982* (London: Penguin, 2001), provide good overall treatments of the war in English. The most comprehensive book in Spanish is probably José Eduardo Costa, *Guerra Bajo la Cruz del Sur* [War under the Southern Cross] (Buenos Aires: Hyspamerica, 1988).

2. Failing to consider an adversary's perspective is not unique to Israel and the United Kingdom. Historical accounts of the Persian Gulf War are decidedly one-sided. The operation was a veritable walkover, although the so-called "100-hour war" could have been much bloodier for the United States. History contains many examples of armies continuing to fight in the face of impossible odds (the German Sixth Army at Stalingrad, for example).

3. The best accounts of the amphibious landing operation come from Michael Clapp and Ewen Southby-Tailyour, *Amphibious Assault Falklands: The Battle of San Carlos Water* (London: Orion, 1996), and Julian Thompson, *No Picnic* (London: Cassell and Co., 2000). Clapp was the Commander, Amphibious Task Group, and Thompson was Commander, Land Forces, at the time of the landings. The best British account of the air attacks is by Sandy Woodward with Patrick Robinson, *One Hundred Days: The Memoirs of the Falklands Battle Group Commander* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1997), despite the fact that Woodward was not present at San Carlos. Argentine accounts of the air action are found in Rubén O. Moro, *La Guerra Inaudita: Historio del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur* [The unheard-of war: History of the South Atlantic Conflict] (Buenos Aires: Editorial Pleamar, 1986); and Benigno Hector Andrada, *Guerra Aérea en las Malvinas* [Air war in the Falklands] (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1983).

4. "Informe Oficial del Ejército Argentino. Conflicto Malvinas" [Official report of the exercise in the Falklands: Falklands conflict] (Buenos Aires: Instituto Geográfico Militar, 1983), II, anexo 15. A small detachment of about 60 men, led by 1st Lieutenant Carlos Esteban, was at Fanning Head, near San Carlos, but they were attacked by naval gunfire and special forces as the landings began and were unable to delay the amphibious operation. Those who were not killed or wounded escaped to Port Stanley. Some later participated in the fighting at Darwin-Goose Green. See Felix Roberto Aguilar, Francisco Cervo, Francisco Eduardo Machinandiarena, Martín Antonio, and Eugenio Alfredo Dalton, *Operaciones Terrestres en las Islas Malvinas* [Ground Operations in the Falkland Islands] (Buenos Aires: Circulo Militar, 1985), 135-39.

5. Thompson, 66-68.

6. Ibid., 70-72.

7. Helmuth Carl Von Moltke, *Moltke on the Art of War: Selected Writings,* trans., Daniel J. Hughes and Harry Bell (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1993), 45. The overuse of detailed planning and the failure to employ Auftragstaktik is the theme of Spencer Fitz-Gibbon's *Not Mentioned in Despatches: The History and Mythology of the Battle of Goose Green* (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 1995).

8. The plan is described in great detail in three books, each with a unique perspective: Fitz-Gibbon, 11-22; Mark Adkin, *Goose Green: A Battle is Fought to Be Won* (London: Cassell and Co., 1992), 145-68; and John Wilsey, *H Jones VC: The Life and Death of an Unusual Hero* (London: Arrow Books, 2002), 256-63.

9. *Informe Oficial* [official report], vol. I, 78; Costa, 349; Adkin, 28, 366-67. The strengths given for the units on both sides include command and support elements that did not actively participate in the fighting. The number of combat troops engaged at the front was probably no more than 300 to 350 on either side.

10. The Argentine commanders were concerned the British could mount operations at the rear because of their advantage in helicopter support. They do not seem to have realized that the attack on the *Atlantic Conveyor* on 25 May had resulted in the loss of half of the British helicopter force, including four of five Chinooks, the only helicopters suitable for the rapid movement of troops and, equally important, heavy weapons.

11. Costa, 346-47.

12. Ibid., 347.

13. *Informe Oficial* [official report], 84-87; Moro, 392-96, 399-401; Wilsey, 269-83.

14. Middlebrook, 271-72; Carlos M. Túrolo, ed., *Así Lucharon* [How they fought] (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamerica, 1983), 267-68.

15. Adkin, 351-52; Max Arthur, ed., *Above All, Courage: Personal Stories from the Falklands War* (London: Cassell and Co., 2002), 192-93.

16. Italo Piaggi outlines the views of the officers present for the discussion in *El Combate de Goose Green* [The Battle of Goose Green](Buenos Aires: Editorial Planeta, 1993), 92-93.

17. Adkin, 357-59.

18. Carl von Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege* [On war](Berlin: Ullstein, 2002), 372.

19. See Middlebrook, 299-300. While it is convenient to point out the failure to use the Argentine Air Force troops at Darwin-Goose Green, this was really part of a larger failure to make effective use of personnel. For example, the 5th Regiment and all but a section of the 8th Regiment spent the duration of the war at two locations on West Falkland, which was even more sparsely populated and never invaded by the British. Had these two regiments been at Goose Green—or at San Carlos—events might have unfolded differently.

20. Piaggi, E-mail to the author, 28 February 2004.

21. Michael Bilton and Peter Kosminsky, *Speaking Out: Untold Stories from the Falklands War* (London: André Deutsch, 1989), 149.

22. Clausewitz, 168.

23. Fitz-Gibbon, 184.

24. Aguilar, Cervo, Machinandiarena, Antonio, and Dalton, 150-51.

25. Robert S. Bolia, Michael A. Vidulich, W. Todd Nelson, and Malcolm J. Cook, "A History Lesson on the Use of Technology to Support Military Decision Making and Command and Control," in *Human Factors of Complex Decision Making,* ed., Malcolm J. Cook (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, forthcoming).

26. Piaggi, "Hazme el favor de retirarte" [Do me the favor of returning], *El Combate de Goose Green* [The Battle of Goose Green], 81.

27. There are numerous references in Piaggi's *El Combate de Goose Green* to the failure by the joint command to resolve the command relationship at Goose Green.

28. Costa also fails to note that the first lieutenants commanding A and C Companies were in fact the highest ranking company grade officers on the peninsula. In an e-mail to the author, dated 1 March 2004, Piaggi said the captains of the 12th Regiment had either been evacuated to the continent because of illness or were assigned other duties at Stanley.

29. The superiority of Auftragstaktik is one of the central themes of Fitz-Gibbon's book.

30. Middlebrook.

31. Piaggi, E-mail to the author, 1 March 2004.

32. Piaggi, chap. 5; Aguilar, Cervo, Machinandiarena, Antonio, and Dalton, 165.

33. Piaggi indicated that the conscript class of 1963 had received only 45 days of training and that 45 percent of them were illiterate. For a discussion of conscript armies in the Arab-Israeli wars, see John Laffin, *Arab Armies of the Middle East Wars, 1948-73* (London: Osprey Publishing, 1982), 6.

34. The cold and humidity are themes that pervade Piaggi's writing. His 12th Regiment was from the province of Corrientes, in northern Argentina. The original British task force was composed exclusively of troops who had trained extensively in cold-weather environments. While both Para battalions had been either in Northern Ireland or Germany, the three Royal Marine Commandos had trained in Norway as part of their NATO mission.

35. Ibid.

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